

Lithuanian Premier Promotes Compromise

By Ann Imse
Associated Press

VILNIUS, U.S.S.R., June 26—Lithuania's prime minister today asked the republic's parliament to freeze its declaration of independence, saying that breaking away from the Soviet Union would be impossible without compromising with the Kremlin.

Kazimiera Prunskiene said that Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev told her in a telephone call earlier in the day that he would end Moscow's nine-week-old economic embargo against the breakaway Baltic republic in return for a temporary suspension of Lithuania's March 11 independence declaration.

Gorbachev also said he would begin negotiations that "will discuss a different status for Lithuania, including as an independent state," according to the prime minister.

There was no confirmation from Soviet officials of Prunskiene's claim that Gorbachev—who met early today in Moscow with Lith-

uanian President Vytautas Landsbergis—had softened his position on independence. The only statement from Moscow about Lithuania was more toughly worded.

Prunskiene told the Lithuanian parliament that the republic will not be able to escape the economic blockade imposed in April by the Kremlin, take control of its borders, or be free of Soviet Army soldiers without compromising.

"We need negotiations," she said. "We don't have a magic wand to solve these problems."

Prunskiene also hinted that the future of her government may depend on how the parliament, called the Supreme Council, reacts to the proposed compromise. "Maybe a new government could find some such solution," she said.

Lithuania, a republic of 3.8 million people, and its parliament are divided over whether to accept a compromise with Moscow over the declaration of independence.

Gorbachev telephoned Prunskiene in the Lithuanian capital of



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Vilnius two hours after meeting with Landsbergis to offer what the prime minister described to parliament as a softening of his position.

Prunskiene said that Gorbachev did not repeat his demand that the republic "return to March 10," meaning that Lithuania again act as a Soviet republic rather than an independent state. That, she said, means that he is willing to negotiate with Lithuania as a sovereign state,

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and recognize its declaration of independence.

But the Soviet news agency Tass, quoting what it said was an official report on the meeting with Landsbergis, said the Lithuanian president was told that talks can only be held "if Lithuania declares a moratorium and suspends the act of March 11 for a period of talks. They can be held only in the context of an inter-republican dialogue on the preparation of a new union treaty and the formation of a union of sovereign socialist states."

Landsbergis, who returned to Lithuania after his meeting with Gorbachev, did not give the parliament a clear account of the session, but said he came away from it with a much better idea of what was acceptable to the Soviet leader.

Committees of the Supreme Council will meet Wednesday to discuss 10 versions of the compro-

mise. The full parliament is to discuss them Thursday.

Unlike Prunskiene, Landsbergis made no appeal for acceptance of the compromise in his speech to parliament. The Lithuanian president said he was simply offering a draft for discussion.

Top Soviet officials also reportedly were debating whether to delay the national Communist Party Congress, set to open July 2. Gorbachev might face a challenge from traditional Soviet Communists at the meeting, as well as a walkout by progressives.

Lithuanian officials said a sharp debate was going on in the republic on how their independence drive would be affected by the congress.

The Lithuanians indicated that they do not know if they should accept the compromise while Gorbachev is strong enough to offer it or hold out for possible victory by reformers who support the republic's right to independence.